



THE CONNECTION 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

The Role of Citizenship in Our Lives

1 PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

2 FOCUS ON CITIZENSHIP

5 STORIES OF CITIZENSHIP RECLAIMED

9 THE CORNERSTONE SOCIETY

11 THE CONNECTION INSTITUTE

12 THE CONNECTION FUND

14 PARTNERS IN SUCCESS

16 FINANCIALS

19 2015 SUPPORTERS

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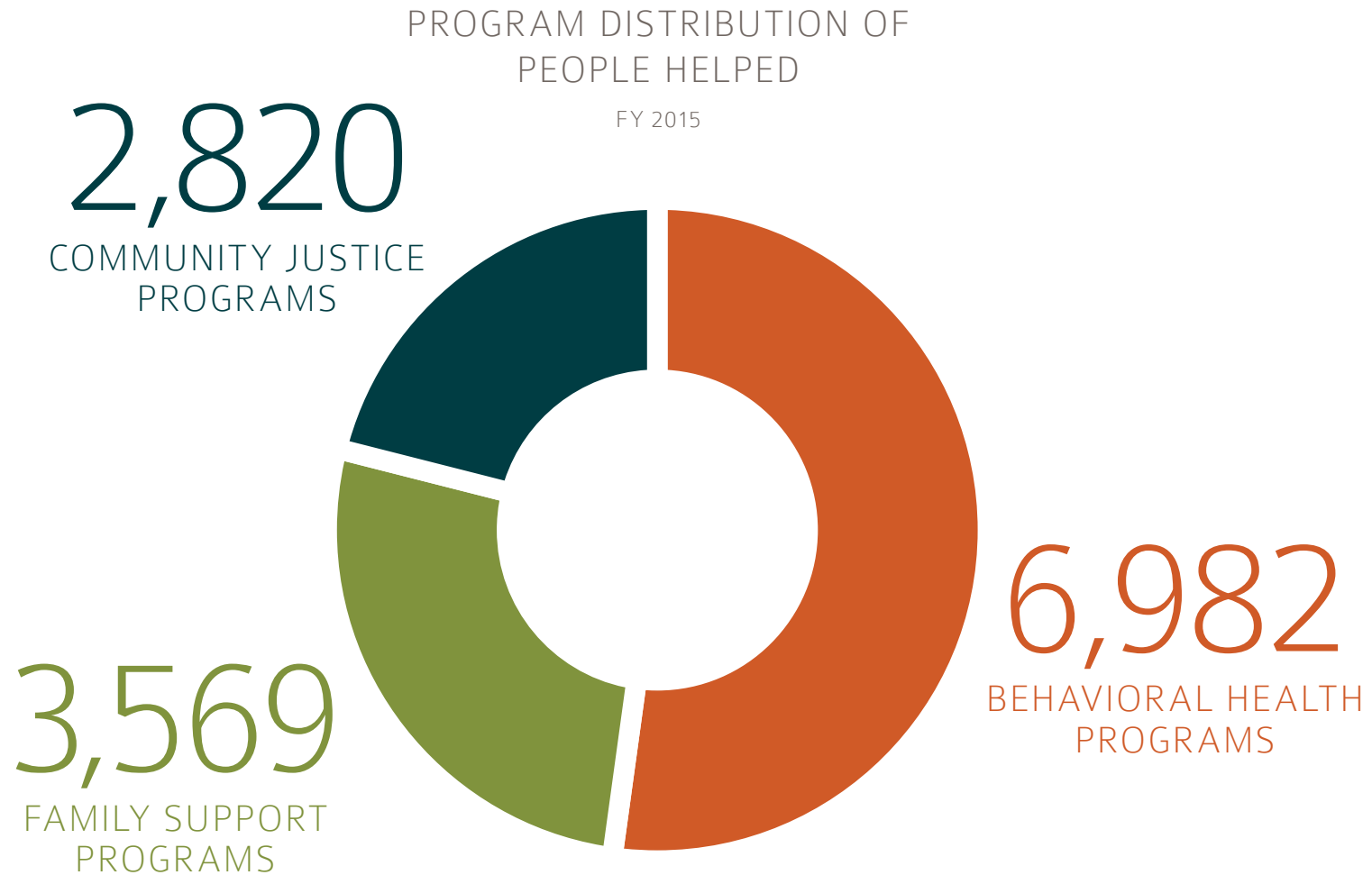
HOW DO WE MAKE THE CONNECTION? THE CONNECTION IS A STATEWIDE HUMAN SERVICES AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY THAT HELPS THOUSANDS OF CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS EACH YEAR WITH ISSUES OF HOMELESSNESS, MENTAL ILLNESS, SUBSTANCE USE, AND COMMUNITY JUSTICE REHABILITATION.

THE CONNECTION'S MISSION: BUILDING SAFE, HEALTHY, CARING COMMUNITIES AND INSPIRING PEOPLE TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL AS PRODUCTIVE AND VALUED CITIZENS.



WE ARE PROUD TO REPORT THAT THE CONNECTION HAS RECEIVED RE-ACCREDITATION FROM THE COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION (COA) COA is an independent, not-for-profit organization that partners with human service organizations worldwide to improve service delivery outcomes by developing, applying, and promoting appropriate best practice standards. Achieving re-accreditation entails review of all aspects of The Connection's programs and services. COA accreditation has improved the way the agency delivers services to our clients and the community, and has established strategies for continual improvement in the years to come.

This past year, The Connection's staff assisted more than **13,000 people** throughout Connecticut who have experienced trauma in their lives and are struggling with substance use, mental illness, homelessness, and community justice issues. In addition, through The Connection's Institute for Innovative Practice®, we connect "research to practice" to better serve our clients, raise awareness of societal issues, and promote sound public policy.



AS WE ENCOURAGE INTEGRATIVE CARE, MANY OF OUR CLIENTS RECEIVE ASSISTANCE FROM MORE THAN ONE CONNECTION PROGRAM OR SERVICE.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Research shows that the more individuals feel a sense of belonging, the better their outcomes in mental health counseling, healthy family relationships, community justice rehabilitation, and community integration. This past year, The Connection studied Yale Associate Professor of Psychiatry Michael Rowe's concept of "Citizenship" as a way to explore and understand the concept of recovery and the role that the community mental health model plays in fostering recovery. A sociologist by training, Professor Rowe is co-director of the Program for Recovery and Community Health at the Yale School of Medicine and a consultant to The Connection. His exploration of outreach to the homeless and the importance of valued social roles for those with mental illness has led to a thirty-year career focused on understanding the concept of recovery and groundbreaking research on the concept of Citizenship.

Professor Rowe defines Citizenship as a "strong connection to the 5 'R's: rights, responsibilities, roles, resources, and relationships. Going along with these 5 'R's is the need for a sense of belonging in one's community and in society. Citizenship is consistent with social inclusion and community integration. It's also consistent with the work of personal and social recovery."

The Agency's 2015 Conference entitled "Citizenship: Creating the Conditions for Belonging," brought the concept of Citizenship home to staff throughout the agency. All staff were trained to understand the concept of Citizenship and embrace its practice in their work with clients. By fostering Citizenship through our work with clients at both the individual and community levels, we provide clients with opportunities for peer support and guidance, knowledge and skill building, linkage to community resources, and assistance in navigating other social service systems. Clients are encouraged to make connections with others through shared interests and communal activities, and through engagement in advocacy activities. Staff and clients also work together to integrate their behavioral and primary healthcare.

Samples of the tool developed for determining one's level of Citizenship are included for your information. Test results can be very useful in helping clients find paths to recovery.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

John LaRosa
CHAIR, THE CONNECTION, INC.

Stephen Angle, PhD
CHAIR, THE CONNECTION FUND, INC.

CITIZENSHIP MEASURE: THINKING ABOUT YOUR LIFE IN GENERAL RIGHT NOW, PLEASE READ EACH STATEMENT AND RATE ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 5 HOW MUCH YOU FEEL THAT THE STATEMENT APPLIES TO YOU.

How much do you feel that...	NOT AT ALL / NEVER		SOMETIMES		A LOT / VERY OFTEN
1. Your personal decisions and choices are respected	1	2	3	4	5
2. You have access to adequate healthcare	1	2	3	4	5
3. You can go where you want to go	1	2	3	4	5
4. You can make choices about how you spend your money	1	2	3	4	5
5. You would have access to public assistance, if needed (disability, unemployment, natural disaster relief, welfare, SSI, Food Stamps, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5

Stories of Citizenship Reclaimed



A Fresh Start

Amelia, age 29, is sitting in the living room at Hallie House in Middletown, one of The Connection's three programs for pregnant or parenting women in recovery from addictions.

Amelia grew up in Meriden and New Britain and has struggled with addictions since she was a teenager. The path that led to her addiction is a common one. "I had back surgery when I was 14 and was given pain medications. Over time, I became dependent and then started misusing." Amelia's substance use continued until she was in her early twenties. But soon after her six-year-old son was born, she went to a program to address her addictions. "I'd lost custody of my kids and wanted to get them back," she says.

Amelia was in the rehabilitation program for eight and one-half months, did well, and regained custody of her children. She stayed clean for four years. But everything changed when Amelia was diagnosed with cervical cancer.

She began chemotherapy, and then opted for surgery. The chemotherapy, surgery and recovery had devastating effects. "I lost my job, my apartment and had to send my kids to live with their dads." And she spiraled further downward. "Since I'd lost everything, there was nothing left to lose except my sobriety — and that went as well."

Horrified by her relapse, she began looking for a recovery program and found Hallie House. "They were very supportive — I'm really grateful." One of the best decisions Amelia made was to engage fully in therapy. "Therapy has helped me see things from different points of view, and to grow as a person, moving forward rather than being stuck in the past. Therapy is tough — but it's helping me."

Amelia graduated from the Hallie House program and moved into her own apartment the following week. She is currently cancer-free and hopes for the best. Amelia's plans for the future include receiving her high school diploma, regaining custody of her children, and enrolling in a program to be trained as a substance abuse counselor. "I want to take my struggle and turn it into my triumph to help other people."



JOHN WITH HIS CASE MANAGERS, SAMANTHA DODGE (LEFT) AND NADIA KARACHRISTOS (RIGHT).

Working to Achieve His Goals

John, a recent graduate of the REACH program in Meriden, is one of the program's great successes.

REACH (Re-Entry Assisted Community Housing) is a statewide, scattered-site supportive housing program for individuals re-entering the community from the correctional system. Case managers work with clients to find appropriate housing

and jobs and to develop the skills needed to maintain successful, independent lives within the community.

John, now 31 years old, has been working full-time at a warehouse since September 2015 and in December moved into his own apartment. He has clear plans for the future, which include finding a better job, finishing school, and finding something to invest in.

John grew up in Hartford and worked for a while in his family restaurant. As a youth, he had some minor infractions with the law. But in 2010, a domestic dispute with the mother of his two children resulted in a prison sentence. He was paroled after having served 37 months and went to a halfway house in Hartford. While in prison and at the halfway house, he took advantage of numerous educational opportunities. There he also learned about the REACH program. He applied, was accepted, and immediately began working with The Connection's case management staff.

When he was ready to move out on his own, he reached out to staff at The Connection Counseling Center, where he was attending groups. They referred him to the federal Access to Recovery and state Basic Needs programs for housing assistance. John is highly motivated and has an excellent work ethic, so he was able to secure employment at a warehouse only a 10-minute walk from his apartment.

And John has dreams. "I want to own my own business — something that's creative and makes money — maybe something in the food industry." Now that his life is stable he plans to go back school to get his GED. He understands that everything will come if he keeps working at it.



BOB WITH ALISON BRINKMANN, PRESIDENT OF SIMPLY SHARING, WHOSE ORGANIZATION PROVIDED FURNITURE FOR MANY OF THE NEW WINTER GROVE RESIDENTS

Housed and Hopeful

On October 9th, Bob moved from his shared room at the Eddy Shelter of Middlesex County to a beautiful, brand-new, one-bedroom apartment at the Winter Grove apartment complex for low-income elderly in Southington. He had been homeless for more than five years.

Born in Reno, Nevada, Bob is a well-traveled man who has lived in many places: San Francisco, Los Angeles, Cleveland, Stamford, Seattle, and Saint Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands. His years in Saint Thomas were the result of his parents having semi-retired there. Bob met his wife in Saint Thomas, but soon after they were married, she began to miss her own family who lived

in Washington state. So the two of them packed up their belongings and moved from Saint Thomas to southern Washington, where they lived and worked for the next 14 years. Bob and his wife owned a home there.

When Bob's wife died in 2003, he decided to move back to Connecticut and began working as a power specialist, working mostly with small engines, at a large building supply store. But in 2009, as a result of the economic downturn, Bob lost his job and this led to his homelessness. Bob heard about The Connection's Eddy Shelter and became a program guest.

While he was at the Eddy Shelter, Bob worked with the shelter's housing specialist to place his name on waiting lists for housing. But because waiting lists were long, Bob left the shelter and lived in a tent for a while. He returned to the shelter in the cold weather and continued to work with the housing specialist.

And then, Winter Grove opened. Winter Grove is a low-income apartment development by NeighborWorks® New Horizons. The Connection is providing on-site counseling services at the complex. And, several of the apartments are reserved for homeless individuals. Bob says, "It's so amazing here — it's almost overwhelming. My apartment backs up to the woods! And the location is great! It will be really wonderful living here."





Cornerstone Society Established to Benefit New Haven Behavioral Health Clients, Programs

The Connection's Dwight House Group Home was renamed Cornerstone in early 2015 to honor the Cornerstone legacy and to ensure that the Cornerstone name remains part of the history of mental health services in the New Haven community.

Cornerstone was conceived in 1967 when Joel Finkle, a New Haven businessman, and Dr. Thomas Detre, a psychiatrist at the Yale School of Medicine, gathered together a small group of community leaders to discuss the need for an intensive aftercare service for mentally ill men and women who had been discharged from public and private psychiatric hospitals. Cornerstone, Inc. was officially incorporated on July 17, 1968, and in August 1970, Cornerstone Halfway House opened its doors and began serving 15 adult men and women.

Over the next two decades, Cornerstone, Inc. grew significantly, adding the Norton Court supportive independent residences program, the HUD-funded Pendleton House dual-diagnosis program, and the Park Street Residence. In September 1997, in an effort to expand its operations and include an outpatient clinical service, Cornerstone began collaborating with Alcohol Services Organization of South Central Connecticut, Inc. (ALSO, Inc.). The two organizations merged formally in December 2001 under the name ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc.

In 2010, after a period of affiliation and collaboration, ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc. merged with The Connection. The partnership between ALSO-Cornerstone and The Connection has been highly successful, resulting in the agency's continued growth in the areas of behavioral health, supportive housing, and community justice in New Haven and beyond.

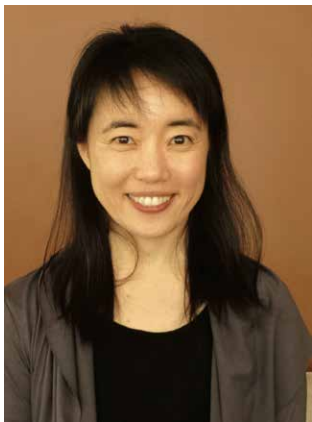
On May 14, a gala reception was held in New Haven to announce the formation of the Cornerstone Society, that supports the needs of the clients and recent graduates of our New Haven-based behavioral health programs. Gifts to the Cornerstone Society not only honor the Cornerstone legacy, but also serve the needs of some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

For information about supporting the Cornerstone Society, please contact Claire Bien at 860 343-5500, x1601.

The Connection Institute
for Innovative Practice[®]

The Connection Institute, the research division of the agency, was pleased to lead the way in bringing the concept and practice of citizenship to the agency this year, as featured in the annual conference held at Wesleyan University in October 2015. The conference featured the work of Dr. Michael Rowe, a senior research consultant to The Connection Institute, who has pioneered the work of helping those individual most on the margins of society feel a greater sense of belonging and participation.

The Institute is embarking on a major initiative to bring Dr. Rowe's Citizenship framework into the agency. In 2015, Institute staff piloted the Citizenship Measure, featured in this Annual Report, to 180 residents of our



DR. BANDY LEE

community justice residential programs. The results were surprising and hopeful: they showed a greater degree of self-reported belonging and engagement among our clients than we would have expected. We will be bringing the measure to all clients of the agency in 2016, as well as applying for a \$2.5 million federal grant to bring the full Citizenship intervention — comprised of classes, peer support, and valued role projects in the community — to Connection clients in 2016.

The Connection Institute is also excited to report the hiring of Bandy Lee, MD, a Yale psychiatrist, as a consultant to the Institute in 2015. Dr. Lee also is serving as the agency's part-time Medical Director. She is an internationally renowned expert in violence prevention, and consultant to the World Health Organization on these issues. She has published 100 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. She has made immediate contributions to the Institute and the agency, and we are delighted to be working with her.

THE CONNECTION FUND IS THE DIVISION OF THE CONNECTION THAT DEVELOPS STATEWIDE INNOVATIVE HOUSING SOLUTIONS AND ALLOWS THE CONNECTION TO OWN A RANGE OF FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT. AS PART OF THE CONNECTION'S DEDICATION TO TRANSFORMING LIVES, WE SEEK TO CREATE POSITIVE LIVING SPACES THAT WE WOULD LIVE IN OURSELVES. READ ON FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE LATEST CONNECTION FUND INITIATIVES.

PROFILE: WINTER GROVE



In partnership with town and state officials and The Connection, NeighborWorks® New Horizons opened Winter Grove, a 40-unit apartment complex for low-income elderly (62 and above) in Southington in November. The Connection provides on-site counseling services to Winter Grove. This state-of-the-art facility includes a laundry area, lounges, craft room, community room, and tenant storage designed according to EnergyStar standards.

Winter Grove fills a pressing need in Connecticut, as more than 12 percent of the population is over 65. The unit is one of only two of its kind in Connecticut, and will help address the overwhelming need for affordable housing for the elderly. Clients who have been homeless with untreated health needs are at far greater risk of getting sicker and requiring much more costly and complex care.

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“Despite the stigma that surrounds the term ‘affordable housing,’ this project will serve a diverse population and help residents in desperate need of housing, while using little in terms of public services.”

U.S. SENATOR RICHARD BLUMENTHAL

PROFILE: MILESTONE

The Connection recently celebrated the opening of Milestone Apartments, a 30-unit permanent supportive housing development in Bridgeport. Envisioned as a cornerstone development in the city's East End, it was built by Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust (BNT) and combines supportive and affordable units with market rate housing designed to serve

low-income adults with special needs, particularly veterans. The Connection serves as the facility's service provider.

The first floor of the complex has 9,000 square feet of commercial space

that is home to an early learning center operated by Action for Bridgeport Community Development, Inc. (ABCD). BNT has a long-standing relationship with the City of Bridgeport and has a direct grassroots connection with the East End Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ), civic groups, and various governmental entities in the city.



HUD SECRETARY JULIAN CASTRO WITH DIRECTOR OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT BETSY CRONIN, AND DIRECTOR OF HOMELESS OUTREACH HELEN LAVIN MCALINDEN.

Joey Logano Supports Second Chances at The Connection

Always one to go fast, Joey Logano proved he can push the limits on anything with four wheels — even if it is a golf cart! The 2015 Racing for Hope event held on July 16 in Portland was a partnership between The Joey Logano Foundation and The Connection. The event hosted 96 golfers at Quarry Ridge Golf Course along with 310 dinner guests at Saint Clements Castle. Attendees were able to celebrate Joey's racing roots while supporting two charities working to make a positive impact for those in need.



Family and friends from the community spent the day with the driver of the #22 Shell Penzoil Ford as he motored his golf cart through the course, occasionally taking a swing. At dinner, guests listened as he and emcee Mike Massaro, from NBC Sports, traded racing stories on the stage. Proceeds from the event benefitted Logano Place, a transitional housing program for homeless adults run by The Connection.

Joey was thrilled with the day's turnout. *“We had such an amazing day. To see hundreds of supporters take time to celebrate with us was inspiring. From this event, Logano Place received over \$50,000 in funding to continue assisting homeless adults who are working to recover from behavioral health and substance abuse issues. This funding will be used to provide these individuals a second chance.”*

In 2014, Logano Place opened at The Connection with a \$35,000 donation from the Joey Logano Foundation. “We are grateful for the tremendous support that Joey has provided to our program,” said Peter Nucci, President and CEO of The Connection. “Logano Place has given its residents reason to have hope for the future,” he added.



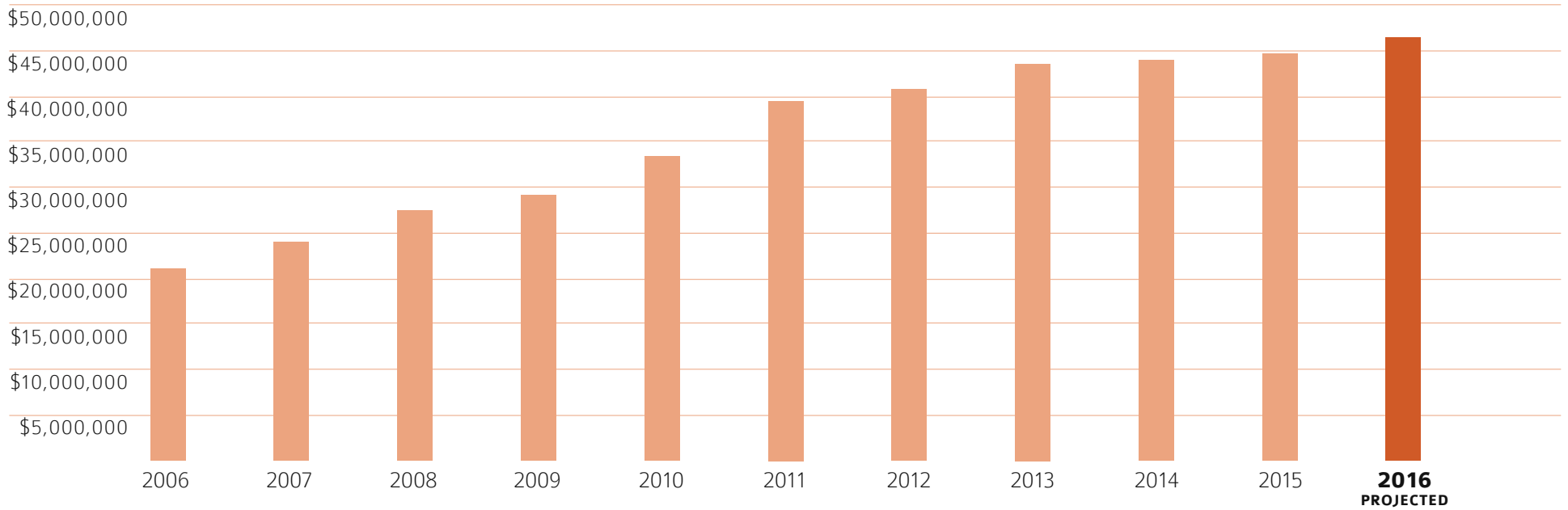
Nearly 1,000 participants raced through beautiful Bushnell Park in Hartford on August 6, for the CFA Society Corporate 5K event, benefitting The Connection. With strong support from the CFA Society — Hartford, and organized by Race Director John Bysiewicz of JB Sports, the event raised over \$10,000 for The Connection's programs. **Join us for our next race on August 4, 2016!**

The Connection hosted another successful Greater New Haven Pizza Fest on June 18, 19, 25 and 26 on the New Haven Green, in partnership with the International Festival of Arts and Ideas. All proceeds support The Connection's New Haven programs. **2016's event will be held on June 16, 17, 23 and 24.**



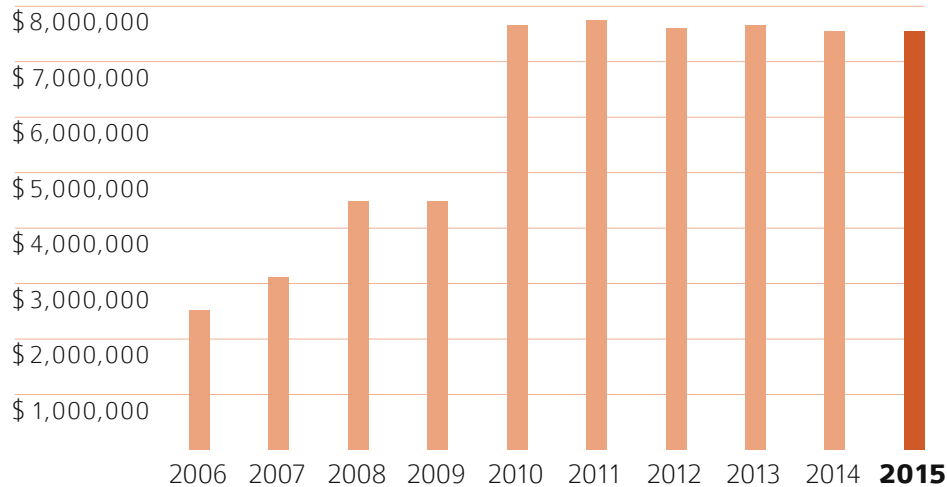
THE CONNECTION, INC. ANNUAL SUPPORT

2015–2016 DATA BASED UPON AGENCY BUDGET, FY 2006 TO FY 2016



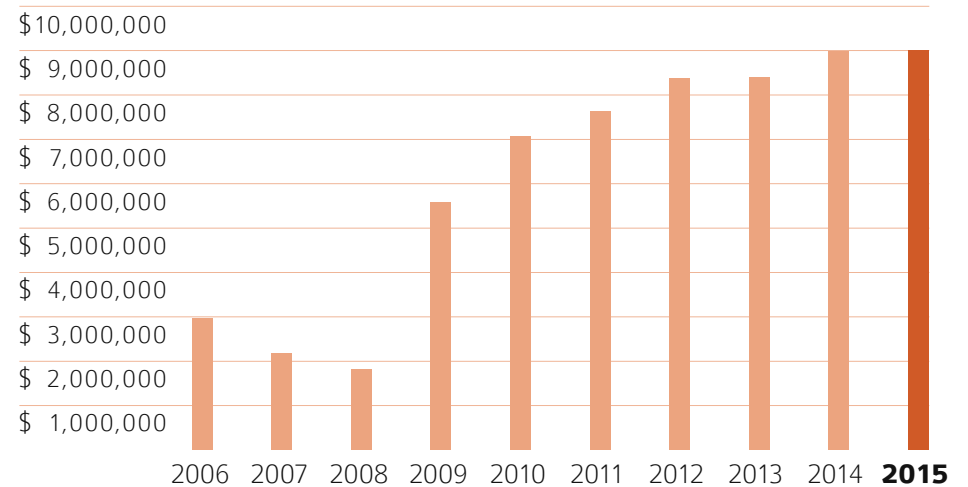
THE CONNECTION FUND, INC. NET ASSETS

FY 2006 TO FY 2015



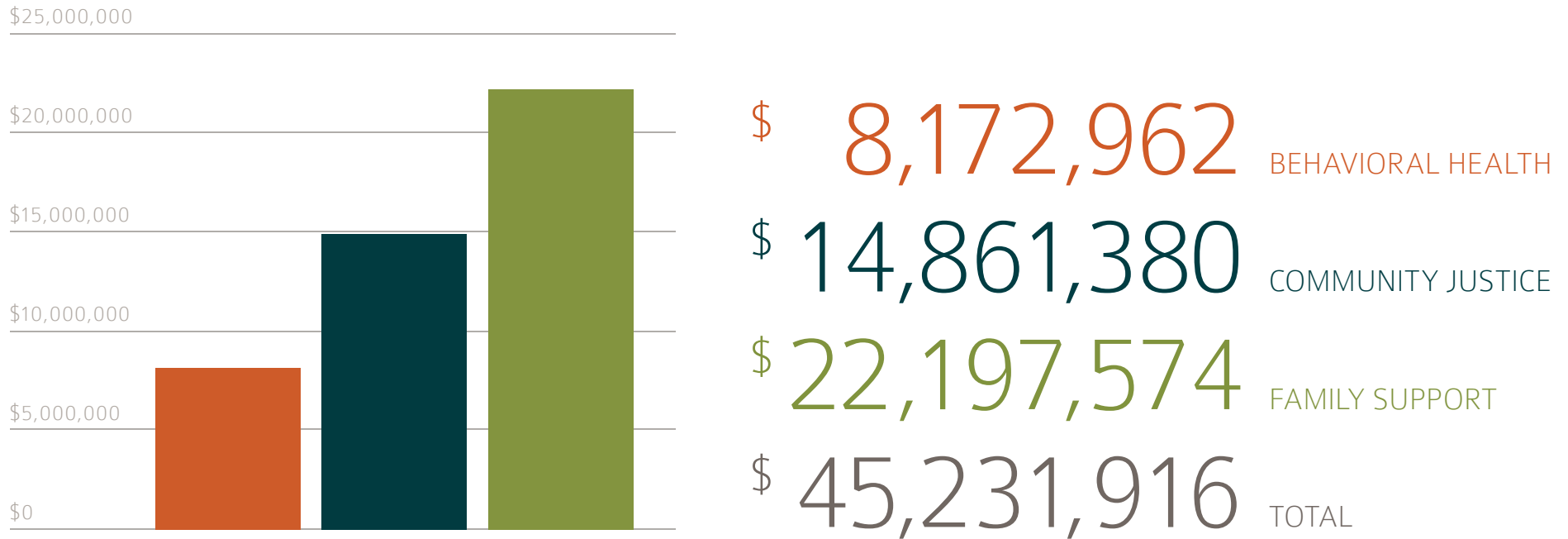
THE CONNECTION FUND, INC. ANNUAL EXPENDITURES

FY 2006 TO FY 2015



TOTAL GRANT EXPENDITURES BY SERVICE AREA

FY 2015



HOW WE USE THE DOLLARS

89% **DIRECT** Services to clients and communities, including counseling, evaluations, community service work, food, housing, care, guidance, supervision and monitoring.

11% **INDIRECT** General leadership and management services including planning, program and fund development, accounting, audits, legal and personnel support, board support and community relations.

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING CARING INDIVIDUALS,
COMPANIES AND ORGANIZATIONS WHO SUPPORTED
THE CONNECTION'S MISSION BY MAKING A CONTRIBUTION
TO OUR AGENCY IN FISCAL YEAR 2015*.

*12 MONTHS ENDED JUNE 30, 2015

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BOB'S STORES			JUDITH FELTON	HEAD 2 TOE UNISEX SHOP
			PETER AND AMY FERRIS	

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FREDERIC AND LYNN KUDISH	MICHAEL ANTHONY'S	OWENS, RENZ & LEE COMPANY	SBW FOUNDATION	TOWN OF CROMWELL
LA MONACO'S	MIDDLEFIELD FEDERATED CHURCH	P & M FINE FOODS & PIZZERIA	SARAH K. SANDERS	TOWN OF DURHAM
JACQUELINE AND RICHARD LAGANA	MIDDLESEX COUNTY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION ALLIANCE	PAPA'S PIZZA AND PASTA	JAMES SCARAMOZZA AND MICHELLE L. BROPHY	TOWN OF EAST HADDAM
LAGGIS & HOULIHAN, CPAS LLC	MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL	JANICE AND LARRY PAPAGUA	GARY SCHOELDLER	
	MIDDLESEX UNITED WAY	DAWN PARKER	SCHUSTER DRISCOLL, LLC	

TOWN OF ESSEX
TOWN OF KILLINGWORTH
TOWN OF MIDDLEFIELD
TOWN OF PORTLAND
TOWN OF WESTBROOK
MACKENZIE TYSON
UNITED ILLUMINATING COMPANY
UNITED STATES BUREAU OF
JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT
OF HOUSING AND URBAN
DEVELOPMENT
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT
OF JUSTICE FEDERAL BUREAU
OF PRISONS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT
OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
ADMINISTRATION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT,
DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT
PROBATION OFFICE
UNITED WAY OF CENTRAL &
NORTHEAST CONNECTICUT
UNITED WAY OF MIDDLESEX
UNITED WAY OF GREATER
NEW HAVEN
VARUNES & ASSOCIATES
VICTOR AUTO BODY WORKS

WALL STREET PIZZA
DEAN T. WARNER
WEBSTER BANK
DEANNA WELSCH
LIBBY WENTWORTH
WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
WHITTLESEY & HADLEY, P.C.
WIDOWS SOCIETY
WILBUR CROSS HIGH SCHOOL

DEBORAH WIMBLEY
ELAINE WOLLISTON
YALE-NEW HAVEN HOSPITAL
YORKSIDE PIZZA
JERRY ZAJAC

THANK YOU.



The Connection

Community-based Services, Advocacy
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